

ORAL ADMONISHMENT (AFI 36-704, Discipline and Adverse Actions)

Air Force Instruction (AFI 36-704 defines disciplinary action as an action taken by management to correct an employee's delinquency or misconduct. An oral admonishment is the least severe penalty in the Air Force discipline program. It is used to correct misconduct or delinquency and to motivate employees to improve their work habits, work methods, or behavior.

An oral admonishment has neither procedural requirements nor prescribed format. The following steps are provided as a general guide to help you ensure that relevant facts are surfaced and considered and that appropriate action is effectively taken. You are required to observe employee representation entitlements at all appropriate steps.

1. Gather available facts.
2. Interview the employee in private; tell the employee the purpose of the interview including that an oral admonishment is being considered state the problem and the facts in a way that the employee can understand.
3. Give the employee an opportunity to answer and to express his or her views about the circumstances of the matter. If the employee requests time for thought before answering, the request should be honored. The employee may respond orally or in writing.
4. Consider the employee's answer and any explanations offered. If the employee raises questions, which you must resolve before making a decision, or if you needed time to consider the employee's answer, additional time should be taken. In such cases, advise the employee that a decision on the matter will be made as promptly as possible and that the employee will be advised of the decision.
5. Determine what action is appropriate.
 - a. If the discussion resolves the matter, tell the employee. "No further action is necessary."
 - b. If the discussion does not satisfactorily resolve the matter and an oral admonishment is warranted, tell the employee and explain why. Make it clear to

the employee that he or she is being disciplined by receipt of an oral admonishment. Identify areas where improvement is needed, suggest methods for improving, and offer suitable assistance and guidance. It is recommended that you discuss the matter with an Employee Relations Specialist before deciding to issue an oral admonishment.

6. Make an notation on AF Form 971, supervisor's Record of Employee which should include the words "ORAL ADMONISHMENT" to distinguish it from no disciplinary counseling; a brief description of the incident requiring oral admonishment; the effective date; and a notation that the employee has been advised of the admonishment. The employee may be asked to initial the AF Form 971 entry. The employee's initials do not indicate agreement with the entry content, but only awareness of the entry. (The effective date is the date the employee is notified of the decision to orally admonish. Delete notation from AF Form 971 two years from the effective date of the admonishment.)

7. Follow-up on the matter and offer assistance, suggestions, and encouragement, as appropriate. Note the AF Form 971 accordingly. Include entries to reflect improvement in the matter, if applicable, and tell the employee of the improvement noted.

Advice and guidance are available from your servicing Employee Relations Specialist, 435 MSS/DPCE/DPCE, DSN 480-2008.